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point of vantage. Before every prayer the Arabs first perform the required Moslem ablutions of washing their hands, face, feet, etc., in sea water; then they go through the prayer ritual facing towards Mecca with their headcloth spread in front of them as a prayer rug. It is for determining the direction of Mecca that the compass on a large dhow is often most used! The first prayer is the dawn prayer said in the first greying light of dawn; the morning prayer takes place when the sun is close to the meridian; the afternoon prayer is called when the shadows begin to lengthen; the evening prayer is said shortly after the sun sets; finally, the night prayer ends the day several hours after sunset. The above applies to Moslem Persians and Indians as well as to the Arabs; obviously it does not apply to Hindus or sailors of other religions. 788

Eating is intimately related to Islamic religion for Arabs and other Moslem sailors, as their three meals come directly after the dawn, the morning, and the evening prayers. In the month of Ramadhan all faithful Moslems neither drink nor eat during the daylight hours; however, during Ramadhan all activities on land and on sea usually hit a low ebb. In other months breakfast consists for the Arabs of little more than a piece of unleavened bread with some sweet tea or water with which to wash it down. Lunch has more to offer, consisting of a mess of boiled rice with a flavoring of *ghee* (clarified butter) and curried or baked fish (if the ship has any fish aboard). The main portion of the meal is rice, which is served on a huge tray, or often simply on a palm leaf mat. The crew gathers around several of these trays or mats and makes quick work of the food, using no implements other than their right hand. They take a little fish (or meat if they are that fortunate), ball a small handful of rice around it and toss the ball deftly into their mouth, usually without losing a crumb. Nothing is ever wasted, as someone always scavenges the last morsel. Supper is essentially the same as lunch. 261 262 264 785

Often a feast is in order in port; this always calls for the slaughter of a sheep (or goat), a number of which are always kept alive on board. The sheep is usually slaughtered at dawn and is virtually dragged from its skin into a large iron pot, where it is boiled in water. The sheep or goat is the *pièce de résistance* and is served whole on a huge tray of rice. For a feast, a curry flavoring or raisins are often mixed with the rice. Various delicacies from the sheep, such as the heart, liver, lungs, and kidneys, are cooked separately and served in side dishes. As the feast starts, the sheep is methodically torn apart limb from limb and fiber by fiber. The meat is always eaten in the same manner: rice is balled around small bits of meat and tossed deftly into one's mouth with the right hand. In pulling 527 252 264

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264 apart the sheep only the right hand may be used, as the Moslem left hand is reserved for less sanitary duties.

Towards the last of the feast, the host seizes the head, rips out the tongue, gouges out the eyes, removes the brain by smashing the head on the floor, and tosses these delicacies on the plates of the guests of honor. To one unaccustomed to the ways of the East, such a scene might look primitive and barbaric, and might remind one of a pack of animals crouched around their prey. It is true that the Arab meal lacks the decorum of a Western table and one needs more than a finger bowl when finished, but once one is accustomed to the Arab way of life, an Arab feast is most satisfying! Before and after the feast one is served the ubiquitous too-bitter Arab coffee and too-sweet tea. Often during the regular day, coffee and tea break the long hours between meals.

Villiers made a very careful survey of the food consumed for 270 days on a Kuwait *bhum* by the thirty men aboard. The total cost was 1502 rupees, which was an average of about 5.5 American cents per man per day (at a rate of exchange of $0.30 per rupee). Villiers' summary of the food consumption is as follows:[53]

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Commodity	*Cost per Unit*	*Number of Units*	*Total Weight*[54]	*Total Cost Rupees*
Dates	3 rupees/package	40	3360 lbs.	120
Rice	8-10 rs/bag	55	8900	500
Flour	6 rs/bag	12	1800	72
Sugar	12 rs/bag	7	1570	84
Dried fish			500	40
Dhall (Indian Corn)	15-16 rs/bag	6	1010	90
Salt	2 rs/bag	3	670	6
Tea			110	50
Coffee			220	30
Ghee (clarified butter)	10-20 rs/tin	9	360	120
Saleet (oil)			400	50
Pickled stuffs			100	50
Chilis			80	10
Onions			1600	50
Potatoes			480	30
Cloves (for coffee)			40	5
Ginger (for coffee)			100	5
Tomato essence			40	15
Canned milk			150	20
Sesame seeds (for bread)			30	5
Lady-fingers and peppers				5

[53] Ibid., p. 427.

[54] These weights were estimated by this author, using the average weight of the units, i.e., packages (of dates), bags (which vary for every commodity), tins, etc., that were in common use in Aden in 1950.